STRAIGHTENING A CHIMNEY.—A large chimney at Thornes has long been overhanging the centre of its base, from four to five feet, and ere long this huge mass of 200 tons of brickwork would, in all probability, have fallen. To prevent this, Mr. Green, engineer, of Wakefield, was engaged to bring it back to a perpendicular position. The workmen commenced, under his directions, to cut out about four-fifths of one course of bricks near the bottom of the chimney, taking care to fill the cavity thus made with a mixture of new lime and earth. During a heavy gale of wind, the last brick was just cut out, and, as was expected, during this last operation the chimney began to move slowly but perceptibly, the new lime and earth gradually yielded to the immense pressure, and were removed, so that in three hours the open space of nearly four inches, which had been made as above described, closed. The chimney had lowered on one side nearly four inches, and gone over at the top more than four feet to a perpendicular position. —*Wakefield Journal.*

GREAT FIRES.—Another fire broke out on the 4th of May, at San Francisco, on the spot where that in December originated, and houses and property which cost 4,000,000 dollars were destroyed. The fire is said to have been the work of an incendiary,—an emigrant from Sydney. In ten days everything was proceeding as if nothing had occurred. In one place the frame of a new gambling-house was prepared and laid as soon as the flames had consumed the old and a space could be cleared on the hot foundation, where, accordingly, another "Hell" was erected, and by night "drove a good business," as usual. The buildings were all of wood.——The news of this fire had scarcely reached us, when it was followed by accounts of another at Philadelphia, in which it is reported that at least 400 houses, valued at 1,000,000 dollars, were destroyed, and the flames still raging with unabated fury. In both of these fires lives have been lost, but especially in the latter, where several explosions increased the mischief.—— From another quarter we have no less startling intelligence. A telegraphic message from Berlin announces that a dreadful fire broke out on the 18th at Cracow, which laid waste a great part of the city, and consumed the archbishop's palace, besides other public buildings. ——The arrival of a vessel at Hull almost simultaneously brings news from St. Petersburgh of a tremendous fire which had broken out in the neighbourhood of the warehouses on the river there on 16th inst. Owing to a strong wind there was every probability, it is said, that the conflagration would extend.

GAS APPARATUS.—In your notice to correspondents I find you have applications to know how to construct an apparatus for making gas for domestic use. In answer I beg to state that I have an apparatus for lighting my own premises, constructed on a very small scale, consisting of furnace, retort, vessel for purifying, and gasometer, the whole occupying a space of only 5 feet square. The material used for making gas is the refuse of the kitchen, such as grease or fat of any description, it matters not how dirty, as the whole is burnt off in the retort: it produces a brilliant white light far surpassing any gas made from coal. I have had it constantly in use for eighteen months, and no bad results have occurred, although it is in a thickly-populated neighbourhood. The apparatus is not at all expensive; it consists of only three vessels, and can be adapted to any number of burners. Sufficient gas can be made in one hour to supply one burner for a sitting-room for twelve hours at a cost of about threepence halfpenny. It may be seen in operation at 34, Howard's-green, City-road.—R. H. T.

EXHIBITION BY BOOKBINDERS' FINISHERS' ASSOCIATION.—The third annual exhibition of designs in the biblical branch of decorative art took place on Monday and Tuesday last in Museum-street, when a still more varied and interesting collection of designs than ever heretofore were presented to view. These ranged from the ancient and monastic to the most recent novelty in this elegant branch of art. Amongst them, too, were a selection of rich and curious Hindu, Persian, Chinese, and other Oriental book boards; and altogether the exhibition was a very interesting one, which proved—full measure of justice being done to the ancients—that these tasteful and varied book decorators have not managed to steal all the merit and the novelty away from their modern brethren. Besides rubbings of many tasteful and ingenious designs by living and other modern finishers, a piece of fancy workmanship by an apprentice of six years' standing really merits special notice. This consisted of a table clock case, richly ornamented with not a little of the talent and fancy as well as the enthusiasm of youth. Amongst the more ancient designs we perceived a copy of one from Stowe, given in our pages in February of last year, together with a quotation from THE BUILDER itself attached to it.

FALL OF A CONE AT GATESHEAD.—An inquest has been held on the bodies of two men killed at Mr. Price's glass-works, by the fall of one of the cones. The jury, however, could not decide as to the cause of the fall of the cone, which was built in 1837, and altered about four years since, when 35 feet out of 55 feet were taken down and carried up again perpendicular and 9 inches thick. Two fans were fitted in 12 or 14 feet above the furnace by way of experiment, to move the machinery of the works by the power of the draught of air up the chimney cone, which it did, but too slowly. No evidence, however, was given to show that either the fans or the alterations could have weakened the cone, the opinions given being, on the contrary, that they could not have done so. The evidence, however, was not so unanimous as to the insertion of a new furnace of fire-brick lumps, which was alleged, by one witness, to have been fitted in without sufficient room for expansion. Cones also are apt to crack when new furnaces are put in.

PAPERING ON DAMP WALLS AND CURE OF DAMP.—A patent, it is said, has been taken out for a fluid containing chiefly india-rubber and gutta percha (dissolved, we presume, in turpentine or naptha, with, it may be, a little boiled oil), for brushing into damp walls as a preparative to papering or painting. It dries into a waterproof film in a couple of days, and will then take on either oil paint or paste for paper. It may also be brushed on the papers themselves, and form waterproof papers. In painting new wood-work, according to the *Patent Journal*, this preparation prevents subsequent shrinking, swelling, or cracking, and obviates the necessity of priming for knots, when used as a first coat, or mixed with paint. We should think one of its most important uses, however, if it adhere properly to the wall without blistering or bursting in warm rooms, would be the suppression of damp itself in walls and floors, without any special reference to the papering or painting of such surfaces. The substance may be one that will sink into *porous* walls, where, having a good hold, and being tenacious, (with the unelastic gutta percha in particular), it may be able to suppress any tendency of the damp to escape into warmed apartments.

BRITISH ARCHÆOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION. —On the 10th, Mr. Pettigrew, V.P., in the chair, exhibitions were contributed by Mr. Lindsay, of Cork, of a drawing of a small crucifix of silver, originally gilt, and apparently as early as the thirteenth century; by Mrs. Graham, of Chichester, the impression of a coin of Allectus, found between the lead lining and stone of the font of West Wittering Church; by Mr. Elliott, a Flemish earthen jug of the sixteenth century, found on the shore at Dymchurch, Kent, having on its surface a series of subjects in relief, with inscriptions in Dutch; by Mr. Baigent, a series of coloured drawings of paintings, found in Wellow Church, Hants, consisting of two crowned heads from the spandrils, and scrolls round the jambs of the windows, of the thirteenth century; also a drawing of a tile, now in the library of Winchester Cathedral, of about the same date, representing an archbishop, and a drawing of a coin, found in the garden of the Benedictine Convent at Winchester, and many interesting seals, by Mr. Chalmers. Mr. J. Moore and Dr. Pettigrew commented on bones found at Hamhill, Yeovil. Mr. C. Baily read an account of Roman and other antiquities found during the excavations for the foundations of a house in Mincing-lane. In this place Roman buildings of two periods were distinctly traced, the floors of each remaining, and between them were discovered the base and capital of a column, a Purbeck marble mortar, fragments of Samian ware, &c.: and many varieties of mediæval pottery, &c., were found in the ground above. The meetings were then adjourned to the congress meeting, which will commence, at Manchester, on August 19th.

BUILDING FOR EXHIBITION OF 1851.—Is it possible that the Royal Commissioners have really thrown the whole 245 plans to the winds, their own bantling, and the seventeen contractors' into the bargain, and sanctioned the erection of a hothouse to hold the proposed exhibition? It seems almost incredible that any body of men in their natural senses could expect manufacturers to expose their costly productions in an immense hothouse, where they would be liable to rapid deterioration, if not to total destruction, by the leakage and condensation inseparable from glass roofs, to say nothing of the dust from the roads through the open luffer boarding of every third compartment, and a scientifically moistened atmosphere produced by the ventilating currents being made to pass through "coarse canvass," which is to be "kept wet in hot weather" to "render the interior of the building *much cooler than the external atmosphere.*" Exhibitors of bright metal-work will regard this proposal with unfeigned astonishment. The internal atmosphere of the building is to be *specially* moistened by the evaporation of water from ventilating blinds of wet canvas, as though the moisture of our English climate were not sufficient to combat against in preserving unoxidized their wares.—T.

BRISTOL.—The restoration of St. John's Church (the tower of which is over the north gateway of the city), is being proceeded with. Messrs. Marmont and Lloyd are the architects. ——The recent fire near St. James's Church affords an opportunity to open to view the very interesting west end of that church. It is of the Norman period, and has a circular window of very curious design. It is much to be desired that this opportunity will not be lost.——The first stone of the High-cross, proposed to be erected on College-green, is to be laid in the beginning of next month. The stone to be employed, we are told, is from Nailsworth, in the county of Gloucester.——On Monday week the foundation-stone of a new British day school was laid in St. George's parish, Gloucestershire (Bristol). It is to be of stone, with school 62 feet by 32 feet, for 200 to 300 scholars: estimated cost about 600*l.* Mr. Crisp is the architect, and Mr. Lee, of Bristol, the builder.

GLAZED IRONWARE.—A report to the French Society of Arts speaks favourably of the vitreous glaze adopted by M. Paris in place of tin, zinc, or lead, on the surface of ironwares. It prevents oxidation, and withstands acids, though not alkalis. In domestic use it prevents food from being tainted with the metallic taste. Sheet iron chimneys are recommended to be thus glazed, especially those of laboratories and manufactories liable to oxidation.

ANOTHER LONDON MONUMENT TO SIR ROBERT PEEL.—On Tuesday last a public meeting was held in Willis's Rooms to promote the erection of some lasting monument at the west-end of the metropolis in honour of the late Sir Robert Peel. The Earl of Aberdeen presided; and the meeting was addressed by the Duke of Wellington, Lord Ashley, Lord Hardinge, and other noblemen and gentlemen. Appropriate resolutions were passed, and a subscription was opened with sums amounting to upwards of 1,600*l.*

MR. FRANCIS WHISHAW announces "An Evening" (August 2nd.), to be devoted to "Illustrated Passages in the Life of an Engineer during the last Thirty Years." We regret to learn, from the terms of the announcement, that Mr. Whishaw's success in life has not been such as his efforts might have been expected to ensure.

TENDERS

For building malting, granary, and maltster's house for Mr. H. C. Wells, East Dereham, Norfolk, Mr. T. Bray, architect:—

Mundford and Cushing	£1135 0 0
Greenhill	1030 0 0
Hubbard (accepted)	1025 10 0

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